

Annual Report to the People

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Horry County



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Mission Statement

The mission of the Cooperative Extension Service is to provide sound, scientifically based information to South Carolinians and help them use that information to improve the quality of their lives.

Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service offers its programs to people of all ages, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital or family status and is an equal opportunity employer.

CLEMSON
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Fostering Agribusiness Development

It should come as no surprise that agribusiness, including both agriculture and forestry, is one of the largest economic clusters in South Carolina. Together, they have a direct and indirect economic impact of \$33.9 billion a year, provide \$7.5 billion in labor income, and create and support almost 200,000 jobs in the state.

Agriculture continues to have a significant impact on the economy within Horry County and the surrounding region. Horry County consistently ranks in the top ten of counties statewide as it relates to the value of sales by commodity group. In spite of the fact that today's agricultural sector does not employ near as many individuals as other sectors in the County, the potential to scale up agribusiness activity that further diversifies an overwhelmingly one dimensional economy is evident.

Realizing the potential of agribusiness economic development, the Myrtle Beach Regional Economic Development Corporation has partnered with Clemson to conduct a detailed study of agribusiness assets, needs and growth opportunities in Horry County. Working collaboratively to ensure that agriculture is part of the overall economic development strategy; Extension will ensure that food and fiber demands of the region's citizens are met for years to come.

Extension Diagnostic Services

Horry County Extension Service is a valuable source of information for homeowners, farmers, lawn care and golf course managers. Services include soil and water testing, as well as plant problem and disease diagnoses. Samples are brought to the extension office and sent to the Agriculture Service Lab at Clemson University, where testing is done by professionals. Within 10 to 14 days of receiving a sample at the lab, the client will receive a report that includes results, along with lime and fertility recommendations for your home lawn and/or garden.

Following the guidelines on the report will help prevent problems with over or under fertilization and can save the client from wasting money. The Horry County Extension Service office received over 2200 samples in 2012. Other lab services available through Extension include testing of feed and forage for equine and cattle producers, diagnoses of turf problems, and weed and insect identification. The Horry County Extension office welcomes questions and encourages citizens to make use of these valuable services.

Extension Horticulture

The Clemson Extension Horticulture program covering the Horry, Georgetown and Marion county area is a diverse program. Horticulture agents provide educational programs in both commercial and residential landscaping, small scale vegetable production along with programming targeted toward water quality and natural resource conservation. Various avenues are used to disseminate current, updated information including small scale seminars and lectures, large group lectures, digital media, print media and web based information.



The 2011-2012 fiscal year was a very productive year with regards to Horticulture and Natural Resource Management. Clemson Extension agents, in cooperation with local Master Gardeners, the Phytoplankton Monitoring Network and the Center for Coastal Environmental Health and Biomolecular Research (CCEHBR), have continued for its 11th year a monitoring program to quantify phytoplankton in local estuaries. Weekly, samples are taken at sites ranging from Cherry Grove in Horry County to Pawleys Island in Georgetown County. These samples are then assayed for current phytoplankton species and populations. The data is relayed to the CCEHBR lab for final analysis. The purpose of this program is to provide scientist with real time data on phytoplankton populations along coastal regions allowing them to be proactive towards any hazardous algal blooms endangering humans as well as aquatic species.

Horry County Peanut Yields Increasing



It has been an excellent year for growing peanuts. The yields were good as well as the price. With these two variables it gave

the grower a good opportunity to make good profits by growing this crop. With this being the case plus the fact that there were a number of new peanuts growers in Horry County this year, the role of The Extension Service became even more valuable.

For those who were growing the crop for the first year there was a lot to learn. Through various Production meetings as well as printed materials we provided this needed information to the grower.

Variety selection, Fertilization, Proper Inoculation, Pesticides needed for weeds, insects, and diseases are all new to the first year peanut growers.

Providing this information was done by The Extension Service. Also, after successfully following all these guidelines the peanuts then have to be harvested. But the question is how to determine when to dig the peanuts is critical. If they are dug too early or too late, money is lost based on both grade and yield. So The Extension Service held Digging Clinics to teach the grower how to properly determine the correct time to dig.

A successful growing season is behind us, and the peanut growers are much better prepared to grow peanuts next year.

Plant Problem Clinics

Clemson Extension Agents and local Master Gardeners are in our 10th year of providing Plant Problem Clinics (PPC) to local homeowners and commercial landscapers.

Approximately 100 PPCs were held this year at various venues throughout Horry and Georgetown counties including a local mall and local farmers markets. During these PPCs, Master Gardeners and Extension Agents will man an information booth for several hours weekly. Yearly, approximately 1000 local residents and commercial gardeners will visit these information booths to acquire information or discuss gardening issues. To kick off this year's Murrells Inlet PPC, a day-long plant seminar was held at the Inlet Square Mall with over 200 folks sitting in on a variety of informative gardening seminars.

Ornamental Plant School

Every year, Clemson Extension Service provides horticulture training to both residential and commercial gardeners through a six course lecture series titled Low-Impact Gardening. This year 48 local gardeners graduated the two lecture series with one being held at the Inlet Square mall with the second being held in Conway.

Horry County was the site this year for Clemson's Ornamental Plant School and Turfgrass School. These two training are held at various sites throughout the state. A total of 87 commercial landscapers from both South and North Carolina attended these day long trainings taught by Clemson University professors and specialist. Ten commercial pesticide applicators continuing education credits were awarded to those attending.

Canning Makes a Comeback: Extension Home Preservation

Clemson University Cooperative Extension agents are offering home canning workshops for first-timers and long-timers, teaching the basics and updated techniques. Whether it is to save money in a tight economy or to eat more homegrown or locally produced fruits and vegetables, there is a resurgence of interest in food preservation. Horry County

Extension Service answered this call by offering an Introduction to Canning Workshop on September 19, 2012, which was very well received. Topics at the class included

- > How to safely preserve fruits and vegetables
- > Pressure cooking and water bath techniques
- > Equipment needs

> Preservation methods by food type

Each attendee left the workshop with a jar of preserved tomatoes and a jar of preserved apples so they could enjoy "the fruits of their labor". Canning benefits families and farmers, and it is a great way to enjoy South Carolina Grown fruits and vegetables all year long.

SC Market Ready Addresses Needs of Regional Food Systems & Producers

Grand Strand area farmers are good at growing things and many Grand Strand restaurants want what local farmers are growing. But sometimes, there is a disconnect between the growers and the chefs. Farmers often don't know how to market their products directly to restaurants and conversely restaurants are not always aware of products that may be available locally.



In an effort to address these information gaps, Clemson Cooperative Extension Service and the state Department of Agriculture hosted a South Carolina Market Ready training workshop on August 30, 2012 to give farmers information about how to build relationships with restaurants, wholesalers and food service buyers.

Originally developed by the University of Kentucky as a compliment to the MarketMaker initiative, the program features information based on interviews conducted with executive chefs and grocers around the country.

Daryl Watts, a farmer from Conway was among those attending the first workshop. He's interested in making connections with local restaurants to sell them vegetables during the summer and greens during the cool season, but Watts says he doesn't know what chefs expect in terms of quantities and availability.

"Do they want to buy from someone who they can count on having the same thing in certain quantities each week, or what exactly do they want?" Watts asked.

Program panelist Robbie Nicolaisen, executive chef at Waterscapes restaurant in Myrtle Beach, says restaurants are asking for more locally grown products because their customers are demanding it and that's due to people today wanting to know more about where their food is coming from.

"People have more of a conscience nowadays about where their food is coming from," said chef Nicolaisen. "It started with things being organic and then it's

just rapidly going from there."

Nicolaisen said products from local suppliers tend to taste better and have a longer shelf life. It's why he chooses to buy fresh fish from markets in Murrells Inlet.

"If I were to buy through a major conglomerate, the fish has probably been sitting in their cooler for a few days and then it gets to the supplier, sits there for another couple of days. By the time it gets to me, it's probably a week old," he said.

Extension will deliver the Market Ready trainings across the State starting in 2013 and plans to come up with programmatic adaptations that are based on participant feedback received for the pilot training. Coupled with other local food systems programs such as those related to value added producer support, direct marketing, farmers markets, distribution, and more, SC Market Ready represents one of the many ways that

Extension is working with local producers to scale up food production to meet the burgeoning demand for fresh fruits and vegetables in South Carolina.



Forestry and Natural Resources in the Lower Pee Dee

Forestry and Natural Resources Programs in the lower Pee Dee

Ben Powell, the Forestry and Natural Resources (FNR) agent for the counties of the lower Pee Dee, has been busy assisting landowners and resource professionals in Horry, Georgetown, Williamsburg and Marion counties. Ben's primary goal is to provide educational programs that improve awareness and management of water, woods, and wildlife in the region. Here are a few of the programs that Ben offered in 2011-2012.



- Pond clinics and site visits for private pond owners and lake management companies.
- The first ever stormwater pond conferences for South Carolina in Myrtle Beach and Charleston which taught close to 400 attendees the intricacies of managing residential and commercial retention ponds.
- Launch of the South Carolina Stormwater Pond Management website which had over 500 unique visits in its first two months of operation.
- Guidance for landowners on managing nuisance wildlife and wildlife food plots.
- Coordinating meetings of the Lower Pee Dee Landowners Association which meets quarterly in Hemingway and gathers forest landowners to discuss various challenges of managing forests and wildlife in the region.
- Driving the creation of the newly formed Blackwater Beekeepers Association which now has close to 60 members and well-attended monthly meetings. For his efforts, Ben was recognized as Extension Agent of the year by the SC State Beekeepers Association.



- Teaching classes for the regional Master Naturalist program, Wildlife Action's youth summer camps, and several other venues.
- Coordinating projects with Horry Georgetown Technical College to teach students to survey invertebrate communities in the managed impoundments at Samworth and Santee Coastal wildlife management areas.

Livestock Programs Coordinated Regionally

Livestock and forage programming is coordinated on a regional level in the Pee Dee so livestock and forage producers can meet in at a central location. Extension staff along with State Animal and Forage specialists from Clemson University assist three Pee Dee Region cattlemen's associations with a minimum of 12 educational programs each year. Together there are over 150 livestock producers who are members of the cattlemen's associations. The associations are the Pee Dee Cattlemen's association, Central Cattlemen's Association, and

the Sandhill's Livestock association. Other Livestock and Forages programs held in the Pee Dee Region include equine management seminars, goat management seminars, calibration field days, manure management programs, and 4-H livestock care presentations.

Goat Management Seminar Benefits Local Farmers

The Goat Industry in the Pee Dee Region of South Carolina continues to grow. Due to this increase, goat owners in the region are looking for ways to improve their care and stewardship of the land on which they keep their goats. Owners are looking for cutting edge programs to increase their knowledge base of management practices and answers to some of the obstacles they deal with everyday on the farm.

Area Livestock and Forages Agent Lee VanVlake coordinated the formation of a committee to design and implement a Goat Management Seminar that addresses these issues. The committee made up of USDA employees, goat producers, and Extension agents conducted the Seminar covering topics such as soil sampling/fertility, forages, kidding, herd health, de-worming, reproduction, hoof trimming, and good management practices to ensure optimum performance of their goats and also to be good stewards of the land.



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Extension is MAKING IT GROW!

Tony Melton, Area Horticulture Agent may be best known throughout the state as a panelist on SCETV's Emmy award winning program Making It Grow. However, Tony also works as a County Agent in a total of 13+ Counties in the Pee Dee region, including Chesterfield, Horry, Sumter, Clarendon, Marlboro, Dillon, Georgetown, Lee, Orangeburg, and Williamsburg. Working with commercial vegetable, fruit, nut, ornamental, and turf producers, Tony coordinates 2 commercial associations, the Pee Dee Plant Professionals and the Pee Dee Vegetable Growers Association. Presenting Extension's message and educational benefits to the people of S.C. through regular editorials and appearances on Making It Grow has become a passion of Tony's work. The weekly program is a live, interactive call-in show produced by ETV and Clemson University

featuring guest speakers on gardening topics, while highlighting interesting places and products from around the state. Other cast members include Amanda McNulty and Extension personnel from across the state. Watch Making It Grow on SCETV, each Tuesday at 7:00 pm.

